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It may be asked by some, why should the government retire \$565,000,000 of non-interest bearing currency indebtedness and issue instead thereof interest-bearing bonds? My answer is that the interest on these bonds being but the small sum of less than \$15,000,000 per annum, the United States could well afford to pay this, rather than keep the business interests of the country stirred up by the issue of more bonds and the uncertainty of financial affairs, as has been done during the last few years. Besides, with this plan established, there would be a perpetual basis for the entire banking and currency interests of the country, and the government could well afford for that sum to let that much of its indebtedness remain unpaid for all time, no matter what its ability to pay might be, in order to keep the currency of the country on a safe and permanent basis.

While this article has not attempted to solve the silver feature of the question in detail, yet, if the government would pass a law making silver or silver certificates legal tender for a limited amount, say \$25, and providing that no national bank notes should be of a smaller denomination than \$10, but that silver and silver certificates should occupy the field below \$25, it would give a position to silver that should, I think, satisfy its friends, without being a threat to lower the value of our currency.

E. J. SANFORD.

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#### BEAUTIFUL EVIL.

DOX QUIXOTE was led to his career of burlesque knight-errantry by reading the extravagant romances of his time. Nowadays we often hear of youthful Quixotes who are led into no less absurd, but far less innocent, careers of adventure by a similar cause. The hero of *La Mancha* was turned into a ridiculous but harmless crank; his modern ectypes, unless they are sickened at the outset by some lucky disaster, for which their fiction rubbish has prescribed no remedy, become more or less desperate criminals. But, as is always true of fiction rubbish, they find no realization of its charm in actual experience. Instead of the picturesque perpetration of crime in heroic defiance of the law and its officers, which they fondly anticipated, they find themselves engaged in sneaking villany, and then in sneaking attempts to escape its penalties. Instead of the luxurious ease varied with romantic adventure so thrillingly described in the stories, they find themselves leading lives of ceaseless terror and self-contempt, hunted from hole to hole like the human vermin they have become.

If the revulsion from romanticism to realism which has taken place in the higher class of fiction could descend also to the lower, it would go far toward the correction of an influence baleful in the extreme to thousands of young lives. But, unhappily, such a reform is impossible in the very nature of things, for in proportion as fiction becomes true to life it takes rank with the higher order, and thus passes beyond the class of readers by whom it is most needed.

For this evil influence of low sensational literature the newspaper must share the responsibility with the cheap novel. A splendid villain is always a more interesting character than a disgusting brute, so whatever nature or fortune may have done to favor a criminal is usually grossly exaggerated. If he happens to possess comeliness of person, grace of manner, or intelligence above the common in his class, the public is usually regaled with rhapsodical descriptions of his beauty, refinement, and intellect, and even

visitors to his cell are apt to be so hypnotized by their reading and their own fancy that they fail to discover the exaggeration.

The typical rascal is never the hero that romance, whether in the dime novel or the newspaper, pictures him. His intelligence is, as a rule, of a very low order, confined to keenness and cunning, which act in the narrow circle of first preying upon his victims and then trying to outwit justice. Compare it with the intelligence which works for good. His courage is generally greatly overestimated. He rarely fights except when he has the overwhelming advantage, or when he is driven into a corner. His magnanimity and amiability—qualities especially credited to him by writers and readers of the low romantic school—are myths. They are no part of his business, save as they serve to cloak his villany. Pure selfishness, or at best physical temperament, is at the bottom of his good humor, apparent generosity, and even his family affection, for when the crucial test comes he will sacrifice anybody and everybody to self. The proverbial "honor among thieves" holds good only up to a certain point. The moment it becomes clear that no advantage, direct or indirect, remains to the individuals of the gang, the vaunted honor is thrown to the winds, the gang disbands, each clutches what he can from the wreck of their common fortunes, and henceforth preys upon his former pals with no more compunction than he feels in preying upon the rest of the world.

Better acquaintance with them would soon disarm the fascinating villains who play such havoc with susceptible hearts. George Eliot's "Tito" was the handsomest and cleverest of the whole precious fraternity. But she allows no one to be charmed either with his "loathsome beauty" or his fiendish cleverness. She makes you so intimate with him, and so soon, that you have no chance to be charmed before you are horrified and disgusted. One isn't inclined to pet a venomous reptile very long, however brilliant its scales or graceful its curves.

Beautiful evil! heroic villany! They have no existence save in the imagination of the poet and the romancer. In real life they are impossibilities. Such beings as Milton's magnificent "Satan" and Goethe's graceful "Mephistopheles" could no more exist than a hippogriff or a minotaur. Their nearest possible realizations would be simply detestable, horrible.

EDWARD C. JACKSON.

#### AMERICAN SCHOOL HISTORIES ON THE REVOLUTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW :

SIR.—It seems to me, with all deference, that Dr. Goldwin Smith in your September number does not give sufficient attention to the statement in Higginson's History: "Probably they would not have objected if they had been represented in the British government, so they could at least have had a voice in deciding what their taxes should be; *but this was not allowed them.*" Such representation was never asked for, and therefore it is surely a perversion of the facts of history to say it was not allowed. On the other hand, the colonies spurned in advance any contemplated offer of such representation. The circular letter dated February 11, 1768, addressed to the other legislatures by that of Massachusetts, cited in Murdoch's *Nova Scotia*, Vol. II., p. 483, after urging the illegality of taxation without representation, proceeds: "This House further are of opinion that their constituents cannot by any possibility be represented in the parliament, and that it will